

SPED 638 Syllabus

Educators as Agents of Change (3 units)
Online - Asynchronous

(Fall 2025)

Instructor Information

Instructor

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Email

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Office Location & Hours

By Appointment

General Information

Course Description

SPED 638 is the final course in the Teacher Induction Program. Students will strengthen their professional and instructional competencies across the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CTSP) culminating in a professional development project. The course focuses on the educator as an agent of change through scholarship, leadership, and advocacy. Current research and theoretical positions in the field will be analyzed.

Prerequisites: Acceptance into the Teacher Induction Credential Program or the M.A. in Special Education; SPED 628DHH; SPED 628EC; SPED 628MM or SPED 628MS; and verification of employment as a multiple-subject, single-subject or special education teacher.

Course Objectives

1. Develop mastery of knowledge and skills gained during the preliminary preparation program.
2. Demonstrate mastery of the CSTP in areas selected on the Individual Learning Plans (ILP) developed in SPED 628.
3. Demonstrate professional expertise and disseminate tools and resources that address identified in the ILP.
4. Identify areas for continued professional growth and development as an agent of change.
5. Use effective communication skills to create successful collaborative partnerships and work effectively in teams, particularly in school change efforts.
6. Engage in research and other literature related to teacher agency and demonstrate in writing professional application of theoretical concepts.
7. Articulate evidenced-base and best practices such as Universal Design of Learning (UDL) resources and consider teaching and instructional technology through the lens of accessibility.
8. Advocate for and with students, including members of underserved groups (e.g. BIPOC, emergent bilingual/English Learners, students with disabilities, LGBTQIA, etc.).
9. Effectively support paraprofessionals, utilizing their time and skills to the greatest educational benefit.
10. Effectively address challenges, manifestations of resistance, and conflict and apply problem-solving strategies for managing them.
11. Incorporate the values of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion into their role as an educator
12. Demonstrate leadership through advocacy, professional development activities, and scholarship.

Course Materials

Required Text

Friziellie, H., Schmidt, J.A., & Spiller, J.(2025). *All Means All*. IN: Solution Tree Press.

References and Resources

California Standards for the Teaching Profession and Induction Skill areas:

1. **CSTP 1: Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning:** Teachers apply knowledge about each student to activate an approach to learning that strengthens and reinforces each student's participation, engagement, connection, and sense of belonging.
2. **CSTP 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning:** Teachers create and uphold a safe, caring, and intellectually stimulating learning environment that affirms student agency, voice, identity, and development and promotes equity and inclusivity.
3. **CSTP 3: Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning:** Teachers integrate content, processes, materials, and resources into a coherent, culturally relevant, and equitable curriculum that engages and challenges learners to develop the academic and social-emotional knowledge and skills required to become competent and resourceful learners.
4. **CSTP 4: Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students:** Teachers set a purposeful direction for instruction and learning activities, intentionally planning, and enacting challenging and relevant learning experiences that foster each student's academic and social-emotional development.

5. **CSTP 5: Assessing Students for Learning:** Teachers employ equitable assessment practices to help identify students' interests and abilities, to reveal what students know and can do, and to determine what they need to learn. Teachers use that information to advance and monitor student progress as well as to guide teachers' and students' actions to improve learning experiences and outcomes.
6. **CSTP 6: Developing as a Professional Educator:** Teachers develop as effective and caring professional educators by engaging in relevant and high-quality professional learning experiences that increase their teaching capacity, leadership development, and personal well-being. Doing so enables teachers to support each student to learn and thrive.

Course Requirement and Schedule

Assignments

DISCUSSION FORUMS (30 POINTS)

1. **Weekly Discussion (15 points - 2 points each):** Each week, you are required to participate in the online discussion forum. This space is designed to foster reflection and critical engagement with the course material. Your post should directly address the assigned prompt, drawing on specific concepts, arguments, theories, practices, or findings from the week's readings. Responses should be concise and focused, with a minimum length of 100 words and a maximum length of 150 words. Please remember that your participation in class discussions enhances both your learning and that of your peers. (RSAA1, 3A, 3C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5C)

PROJECTS (65 POINTS)

1. **Meet Your Peers Slide (5 points):** To help build our learning community, you will design a slide to share with this class. Your slide should include your teaching position, the student population you work with, how you became interested in teaching, and one fun fact about you! (Due: 8/31/25)
2. **JEDI Case Study Analysis Reflection (30 points):** You will read your assigned Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) case study in education. Following your review, create a PowerPoint presentation and record your presentation. Ensure your PowerPoint includes the following elements: (RSAA1, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5C; RSAA1, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5C)
 - A summary of the case.

- The most pressing issues identified.
- Proposed potential solutions.
- A thought-provoking question or prompt designed to engage peers and encourage discussion related to your topic.

Recordings must be created online, using platforms such as Zoom or YouTube and must include captions to ensure accessibility and align with our focus of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Instructions for adding captions on YouTube are available on our Canvas page. You may also include a transcript in your video description. To protect your privacy, please use YouTube's options to make our video viewable "only to people who have the link," and share that link with you class as indicated in the appropriate discussion forum. This assignment will give you practice in making accessible content and managing online privacy settings.

Requirement: 5 - 10 minute presentation **(Due: 9/28/25)**

3. **Agency Research Paper (30 points):** Write a 5-page research paper that examines the concept of teacher agency and its application in your professional practice. Start by reading Calvert (2016) to establish a foundation for your research. Your paper must follow APA format and cite at least **three** additional peer-reviewed articles. Your paper should address the following:
 - **Operationalize Agency:** Define teacher agency and explain what it looks like in your daily work. Describe how you can recognize it in practice.
 - **Professional Development:** Discuss how teacher agency contributes positively to your ongoing professional growth.
 - **Supporting Agency in Your Setting:** Propose strategies for fostering agency within your school and among your colleagues, including paraprofessionals, teachers, and other staffs, to advocate effectively for students and themselves. (RSAA3A, 3A, 3A)
 - **Developing Student Agency:** Suggest ways to promote agency among your students, focusing on self-determination and student voice appropriate to their age and needs. Explain how this can support their social and emotional development. (RSAA1, 3A, 1, 3A, 1, 3A)
 - **Personal Reflection:** Reflect on at least three specific actions you can take to increase your own agency as you prepare to advocate for your students and their families. (RSAA1,5A, 5B, 5C; 1,5A, 5B, 5C) **(Due: 11/23/25)**

REFLECTIONS (25 POINTS)

1. **The Leader in Me (10 points):** Choose and complete two of the leadership questionnaires provided on Canvas. Review your results and summarize your key leadership strengths and areas of growth. Reflect on any surprises or confirmations in your results. Write a 1-page, double-spaced reflection that addresses the following prompts: Identify your main leadership strengths and one area for improvement, using examples from your teaching experience. Then, create an action plan detailing how you'll use your strengths to inspire and support others while addressing your weaknesses, setting at least two specific goals for positive change in your classroom, school, or community for the upcoming semester or year. **(Due: 9/7/25)**
2. **CSTP Goals (5 points):** For those who completed SPED 628 (Induction Program), please revisit your ILP goals from that course and think about the next steps. Reflect on your goals, considering future goals as a professional educator.

For RSP added authorization candidates who did not take 628, review the CSTPs provided in the syllabus and on Canvas, and identify two personal goals that align with one or more CSTPs. Provide a written reflection, double-spaced and one page in length, addressing the following prompts: (RSAA1,5A, 5B, 5C; 1,5A, 5B, 5C)

- Reassess your initial goals and summarize any progress or adjustments.
- For SPED 628 participants, outline future professional goals.
- For non-628 participants, specify two new goals aligned with CSTPs.

(Due: 9/14/25)

3. **S.H.A.R.E. Worksheet (5 points):** This worksheet was developed for co-teachers to use at the beginning of the year to guide effective collaboration. For our class, you will adapt the SHARE worksheet for use with another educator you work closely with (special or general education teacher, related service provider, etc.). After you revise the SHARE worksheet, you will meet with your colleague and write a reflection about your meeting. (Due: 10/26/25) (RSAA1,5C; 1,5C)
4. **Support Log and Journal (5 points):** For the Induction Program, you are required to work with a mentor in the field. This is the person you identified when you applied for the program. During this module, arrange your meetings with your Field Mentor for the semester. You will complete a Log and Reflective Journal documenting and reflecting on these meetings, which will be uploaded at the end of the semester. Please take some time this week to download the log and review the requirements. (a minimum of 1 hour per week for the semester/15 hours). (Due: 11/9/25)

POP QUIZZES (30 POINTS)

1. Quiz 1 (15 points) - Based on Weekly Readings - Working with student who have IEPs; Diversifying Instruction (RSAA1, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4D)
2. Quiz 2 (15 points) - Based on Weekly Readings - Collaboration with Families and Educators; Schoolwide Support (RSAA4D, 5A, 5B, 5C)

FINAL PROJECT (50 POINTS)

Build Your Own PD (50 points): The PD Project is the culminating experience of the Teacher Induction Program. You will draw upon your work across the Induction program including areas of need identified in your IIP, reflection upon the CSTP, and your ongoing application of these competencies at your own school. This project is highly individualized as candidates will identify different needs at their school sites. This differentiated activity enables you to work on your own particular area of need while capitalizing on your strengths. You will either:

- a) Create a professional level resource (e.g. website, online handbook, new program) or in-service (to deliver to an intended audience at your school site) on content that you already know (strength) using a process or format that is new to you (an area of need),
OR
- b) Create a professional level resource (e.g. website, online handbook, new program) or in-service (to deliver to an intended audience at your school site) on novel content (an area of need) using a process or format that is familiar (strength).

Multiple formats for the final product are possible; however, it must include an element of technology. The audience can be anyone in education (e.g. students, families, general education teachers, special education teachers, etc.). The product of your project, whether presentation or resource, should sustain beyond this class. In other words, create a product that you can take back to your school for use with your intended audience. Projects will be shared with other SPED 638 students and you are required to provide feedback for other SPED 638 students on their projects. Candidates are required to have project proposals approved by instructor. Projects may be done alone or in a group of up to 3 people.

****Please note as the PD Project is the culminating class assignment, it must be completed by due dates stipulated on Canvas and this syllabus. This assignment must be completed timely as your colleagues will interact with your final product. If it is not available to be viewed by the designated date, the assignment is not complete. (Due: 12/7/25)**

Late Assignments

Assignments are due as indicated in the course calendar, unless otherwise specified. Late submissions **will not** be accepted without prior approval, which will only be granted under extenuating circumstances.

Grading and Participation

Grading Criteria and Total Points

Letter Grade	Points Earned
A	190-200
A-	180-189
B+	174-179
B	170-173
B-	160-169
C+	154-159
C	150-153
C-	140-149
D	120-139
F	0-119

<u>Total Points</u>	
Meet Your Peers Slide	5_____
JEDI Case Study Analysis	30_____
Agency Research Paper	30_____
The Leader in Me Reflection	10_____
CSTP Goals Reflection	5_____
S.H.A.R.E. Worksheet	5_____
Support Log and Journal	5_____
Quiz 1	15_____
Quiz 2	15_____
Build Your Own PD	50_____
Weekly Discussion Forum	30_____
Total Points (200)	_____
Extra Credit (5-point max)	5_____

This course is delivered fully online in an asynchronous format and extensively utilizes Canvas. It is important to regularly check the Canvas site for the most current information regarding assignments, quizzes, supplemental readings, videos, deadlines, and class updates. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail.

Academic Dishonesty/Student Conduct

Campus Community Values: “The University is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy living and learning environment. Students are expected to be good citizens and to engage in responsible behaviors that reflect well upon their university, to be civil to one another and to others in the campus community and contribute positively to student and university life.”

Academic Dishonesty: I take any form of academic dishonesty seriously and follow the policies cited in the CSUN catalog. For the purposes of this course, if you are caught cheating, fabricating, facilitating academic dishonesty, or plagiarizing in any form, you will receive zero points for that assignment and/or the entire course, and may be reported to the University for appropriate disciplinary action.

Academic Writing: This is a graduate course and student are expected to turn in papers and assignments of graduate quality. All work should represent your reflections upon, and integration of information covered in class in an organized way. It is expected that students will follow the requirements of American Psychological Association (APA) style rules in all written course assignments.

Academic Grievances and Grade Appeals: “Students may file an academic grievance on (non-grade) matters concerning an academic decision, action or judgement by a faculty member. A grade appeal may be filed when a student believes a grade is based on error, violation of University rule or policy, refusal by the instructor to report a grade, discrimination or other improper conduct toward the student.”

You can find the entire text of CSUN’s Policies and Procedures for Student Conduct at the following link: <http://catalog.csun.edu/policies/categories/student-conduct/>

Disability Resources and Education Services (DRES)

“If you have a disability and need accommodations, please register with the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) office or the National Center on Deafness (NCOD). The DRES office is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110 and can be reached at (818)677-2684 or at <http://www.csun.edu/dres>

National Center of Deafness

NCOD is located on Betrand St. in Jeanne Chisholm Hall and can be reached at (818)677-2054 (Voice/TTY)

<http://www.csun.edu/ncod>

Veterans Resource Center

The VRC assists students as they transitioned from military service to academic success. VRC is in the University Student Union and can be reached at (818)677-4672 or vrc@csun.edu

<http://www.csun.edu/vrc>

Pride Center

The Pride Center supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) and questioning students, faculty and staff. They are in the University Student Union and can be reached at (818)677-4355 or pride@csun.edu

<http://www.csun.edu/pride>

The EOP DREAM Center

The EOP DREAM Center addresses the needs of undocumented students, members of mixed-status families, campus faculty and staff. They are in the University Student Union and can be reached at (818)677-7069 or dreamcenter@csun.edu

<http://www.csun.edu/ncod>

Course Calendar

Week	Topic	Action Items
Setting the Stage (Introduction and Self-Assessment)		
1	8/25 Embracing Educators as Change Agents: Introduction and Syllabus Overview Topics: • Introduction to the Course ◦ Syllabus ◦ Assignments ◦ CSTP Goals ◦ Sign Up for Case Study • Intro: Agency and the Educator	Reading: • Chapter 1: Re-Examining the Past, Present, and Future Assignment due by Sunday: • Meet Your Peers Slide
2	9/1 Charting the Course: Self-Reflection and Goal Setting Topics: • Educators as Leaders • Leadership Qualities & Their Role in School Change Efforts • The Importance of Self-Reflection & Goal Setting • Leadership Questionnaire	Reading: • Calvert, L. (2016). Moving from compliance to agency: What teachers need to make professional learning work. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward and NCTAF. Assignment due by Sunday: • Discussion • The Leader in Me Reflection
Building Agency and Professional Growth (Self and the Professional Journey)		
3	9/8 Exploring Agency: Unveiling Personal Empowerment and Decision Making (RSAA1) (RSAA1) Topics: • What does <i>agency</i> mean to you? • Personal Empowerment & its Role in Professional Development • Agency in Advocating for Students	Reading: • Chapter 2: Aligning Beliefs and Behavior Assignment due by Sunday: • Discussion • CSTP Goal Reflection (RSAA1, 5A, 5B, 5C; RSAA1, 5A, 5B, 5C)
4	9/15 Crafting Your Path: The Role of Agency in Professional Growth (RSAA1) (RSAA1) Topics: • Defining Agency for Your Professional Development • Strategies for Career Development	Reading: • Chapter 7: Believe is a Verb Assignment due by Sunday: • Discussion
5	9/22 Empower Your Career: Harnessing Personal Agency for Success (RSAA1) (RSAA1) Topics: • Utilizing Agency for Success • Leveraging Personal Agency to Achieve Educational Milestones	Reading: • Assignment due by Sunday: • Discussion • JEDI Case Study Reflection - (RSAA1,

Week		Topic	Action Items
		Incorporating Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into Everyday Practice	RSAA3A, 3B, 3C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5C; RSAA 1, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4D, 5A, 5B, 5C)
6	9/29	Discovering Your Inner Peacemaker: Identifying Your Conflict Resolution Style Topics: - Exploring Conflict Resolution as an Educator - Constructive & Deliberative Dialogue - What is your conflict resolution style? - Problem-Solving Strategies to Manage Resistance and Conflict in Education - Thomas-Killman Conflict Mode Instrument	Reading: Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion - Quiz 1 (RSAA1, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4D)
Collaboration, Partnerships, and Support Networks			
7	10/6	Bridging Worlds: Empowering Educators as Change Agents in Family Engagement (RSAA3A, 3C) (RSAA3A, 3C) Topics: - Working with Families - Strategies for Family Engagement - Leveraging Community Resources for Family Empowerment, Engagement, and Advocacy	Reading: Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion
8	10/13	Collaborative Classrooms: Strengthening Partnerships with Educators Topics: - Partnerships as Teachers - Shared Responsibilities - Strategies to Support All Students	Reading: - Chapter 3: Collaboration by All for All Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion
9	10/20	Empowering Educators: Fostering Effective Collaboration and Growth Topics: - Working with Teachers and Other School Professionals - Understanding what they do! - Collaborative Goal Setting	Reading: - Chavez, J.M. & Lahav, O. (2023). Collaborating with educational professionals: The TAG framework. Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion - S.H.A.R.E. Worksheet
10	10/27	Unifying Forces: Leveraging the Support of Paraprofessionals (RSAA3A, 3C) (RSAA3A, 3C) (RSAA3A, 3C) Topics: - Essential Functions of Paraprofessionals - Working with Paraprofessionals - Supporting Paraprofessionals in Maximizing Educational Impact	Reading: - Hansen, J.H., Carrington, S., Jensen, C.R., Molbaek, M., Schmidt, M.C.S. (2020). The collaborative practice of inclusion and exclusion. Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion

Week		Topic	Action Items
			Quiz 2 (RSAA4D, 5A, 5B, 5C)
Student Agency and Independence			
11	11/3	Igniting Independence: Strategies to Cultivate Student Self-Determination (RSAA 5A, 5B, 5C) (RSAA 5A,5B, 5C) (RSAA5A,5B, 5C) Topics: - Universal Design for Learning Review - Understanding the Whole Child - Fostering Student Self-Determination - The Social Neuroscience of Education - Our Role and Responsibility	Reading: - Chapter 4: Standards-Focused Planning, Instruction, Assessment, and Grading for All Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion - Support Log and Journal
12	11/10	Empowering Voices: Building Confidence and Autonomy in Students Topics: - Culturally Responsive Teaching and It's Impact on Student Autonomy - Mindfulness and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) for Confidence Building - Strategies That Foster Student Self-Determination	Reading: - Chapter 6: Responding When Students Haven't Yet Learned Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion - Quiz 3
Innovation, Reflection, and Professional Development			
13	11/17	Innovate and Elevate: Designing Transformative Professional Development Projects - Part 1 Topics: - The Importance of Professional Development - Exploring Types of Professional Development	Reading: - Chapter 5: Tailoring Instruction - Weng, Z. (2025). A language teacher's identity and agency development via virtual professional training: An autoethnography. Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion - Agency Research Paper
14	11/24	Thanksgiving: Self-Care & Gratitude Topics: No Work - Enjoy your break!	Reading: Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion: Respond with your favorite holiday dish 😊

Week		Topic	Action Items
15	12/1	Innovate and Elevate: Designing Transformative Professional Development Projects - Part 2 Topics: Finish your PD Project!	Reading: - Chapter 8: Leading the Way Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion - Build Your Own PD (1, 6A, 6B; 1, 6A, 6B)
16	12/8	Exploring Agency: Unveiling Personal Empowerment and Decision Making Topics: What does <i>agency</i> mean to you now?	Reading: Assignment due by Sunday: - Discussion

Note: Course Calendar is tentative and subject to modification.

Linking Page:

Standard	Introduce	Practice	Assess
1		RSAA-pg 3	RSAA-pg 3
3A	RSAA -pg 4	RSAA -pg 4	RSAA -pg 10
3C	RSAA -pg 10	RSAA -pg 10	RSAA -pg 10
4D			RSAA -pg 5
5A	RSAA -pg 11	RSAA -pg 11	RSAA -pg 11
5B	RSAA -pg 11	RSAA -pg 11	RSAA -pg 11
5C	RSAA -pg 11	RSAA-pg11	RSAA -pg 11